

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-15 RSR-01 /076 W

----- 092871

P R 171755 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9307

INFO USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 PARIS 10689

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJ.: FRENCH PRESS REACTIONS TO REPORTED NIXON- POMPIDOU MEETING

1. SUMMARY: REPORT OF NIXON- POMPIDOU MEETING WAS MAJOR ITEM FOR FRENCH MEDIA. PROSPECTIVE MEETING VIEWED NOT AS SURPRISE BUT AS LOGICAL DEVELOPMENT FOLLOWING ON MEETINGS PRESIDENT NIXON ALREADY ANNOUNCED WITH OTHER EUROPEAN LEADERS AND ARISING PARTICULARLY FROM NEED DISCUSS AT HIGHEST LEVELS U. S.- EUROPEAN DIFFERENCES OVER ECONOMIC MATTERS PRIOR NEGOTIATIONS THIS FALL. SPECULATION IS MEETING WILL PRECEDE BREZHNEV'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND FOR REASONS OF PROTOCOL MUST BE HELD OUTSIDE U. S. GENERAL MEDIA REACTION IS FAVORABLE WITH CAUTIOUS PREDICTIONS IT WILL BE FRUITFUL. SOME PRESS COMMENT IMPLIED THE ANNOUNCEMENT CAUGHT THE ELYSEE UNAWARE S. END SUMMARY.

2. REPORT OF NIXON- POMPIDOU MEETING WAS MAJOR ITEM FOR FRENCH MEDIA, WITH MOST COMMENTATORS ANTICIPATING THAT TRADE AND MONETARY QUESTIONS, PARTICULARLY AGRICULTURAL POLICY, WILL BE MAIN TOPIC, AS WELL AS SECURITY MATTERS AND QUESTION OF CONTINUING AMERICAN TROOP PRESENCE IN EUROPE. LE MONDE COMMENTS THAT EVEN ON " THORNY SUBJECT" OF AGRICULTURAL POLICY, " CHANCES OF A FRUITFUL CONVERSATION... APPEAR MORE SERIOUS THAN ONE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT AT FIRST GLANCE" BECAUSE OF A " WILL TO REACH AN AGREEMENT" NOW FOUND ON BOTH SIDES. ON THE POLITICAL LEVEL, LE MONDE FINDS THAT BONES OF CONTENTION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES OVER POLICIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND MIDDLE EAST HAVE CONTINUED TO DIMINISH AND THAT " THE NOMINATION OF MR. JOBERT TO THE QUAI D' ORSAY HAS BEEN MOST

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WELCOMED BY CERTAIN AMERICANS WHO DO NOT HIDE THEIR PREFERENCE FOR HIM OVER HIS PREDECESSOR." COMBAT ALSO FINDS THAT BOTH SIDES HAVE AN INTEREST IN RESOLVING ECONOMIC DIFFERENCES, COMMENTING " THE NEED TO SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER SO AS NOT TO SINK TOGETHER, WHICH HAS KEPT THE MONETARY SYSTEM AFLOAT, WILL AGAIN PREVAIL IN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL RELATIONS."

3. ROGER MASSIP IN FIGARO VIEWS MEETING AS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE GROWING TENSIONS AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS IN ECONOMIC SPHERE HAVE " MADE MORE AND MORE NECESSARY, AND ABOVE ALL, MORE AND MORE URGENT, A THOROUGH CLARIFICATION" OF POSITIONS BETWEEN FRANCE AND U. S. OUTLINING DIFFERENCES IN AGRICULTURAL POLICIES AND POINTING TO IMPORTANCE OF SEPTEMBER MONETARY NEGOTIATIONS, MASSIP COMMENTS

THAT BOTH PRESIDENTS " REALIZE THE EXCEPTIONAL IMPORTANCE OF A DISCUSSION WHICH PROMISES TO BE BOTH DIFFICULT AND PASSIONATE. THAT IS WHY IT IS GOOD THAT THEY CAN EXPLAIN THEMSELVES BEFORE THE DEADLINE." AFTER MENTIONING DIVERSITY OF TOPICS LIKELY TO BE DISCUSSED, INCLUDING SECURITY MATTERS AND POLICIES TOWARD DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, MASSIP CONCLUDES " IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, IT IS REALLY THE FUTURE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN AMERICA AND THE ENLARGED EUROPE THAT WILL BE FIRST AND FOREMOST IN QUESTION, THAT

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P R 171755 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

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IS THE EXACT NATURE OF THE TIES WHICH MUST BIND THE TWO PARTS OF

THE ATLANTIC WORLD."

4. COMMUNIST HUMANITE CONTENDS THE MEETING DOES NOT AUGUR WELL FOR FRANCE SINCE " THE PREVIOUS ENCOUNTERS HAD RESULTED IN AN ACCENTUATION OF THE ATLANTICISM OF THE FRENCH PRESIDENT." HUMANITE COMMENTS NIXON WILL BE ASKING POMPIDOU FOR " UNDERSTANDING IN THE COMING MAJOR MONETARY AND COMMERCIAL NEGOTIATIONS" AND " THE RECENT DECISION TO LET THE FRANC FLOAT (SIC) SHOWS THAT MR. POMPIDOU IS OPEN TO SUCH SUGGESTIONS."

5. THE GAULLIST NATION CONCENTRATES ON ASPECTS OF U. S.-SOVIET BI-POLAR POLITICS AND COMMENTS " MR. POMPIDOU IS IN A BETTER POSITION THAN ANY OTHER EUROPEAN LEADER TO MAKE MR. NIXON UNDERSTAND, ON THE EVE OF THE BREZHNEV VISIT, THAT IT IS NOT IN THE U. S. INTEREST TO TREAT WEST EUROPE AS A SATELLITE OR TAKE UMBRAGE AT ITS EFFORTS TO BUILD UNITY."

6. MOST COMMENTATORS PLACED THE MEETING IN CONTEXT OF THE PRECEDING SERIES OF MEETINGS PRESIDENT NIXON WILL HAVE WITH OTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN LEADERS. THE FINANCIAL DAILY LES ECHOS COMMENTS, " PRESIDENT NIXON APPARENTLY INTENDS TO ENCOUNTER THE EUROPEAN LEADERS IN THE ORDER OF GROWING RESISTANCE... IF HIS EUROPEAN PARTNERS WERE NOT FIRM ENOUGH, IT IS ON THE FRENCH PRESIDENT THAT THE HEAVY TASK WILL FALL TO SPECIFY TO THE AMERICANS THE LIMITS OF THE COMMERCIAL, MONETARY AND MILITARY CONCESSIONS WHICH EUROPE CAN ACCEPT TO DISCUSS."

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UM SPECULATION ON TIMING CENTERED ON A PERIOD JUST PRIOR TO BREZHNEV VISIT TO UNITED STATES, POSSIBLY LATE JUNE OR EARLY JULY. REGARDING SITE, SEVERAL COMMENTATORS POINTED OUT THAT SINCE POMPIDOU HAD VISITED THE U. S. IN 1970, PROTOCOL REQUIRED THE MEETING NOT BE HELD THERE. SPECULATION AS TO LOCALE INCLUDED BERMUDA, THE

AZORES AND FRENCH ANTILLES. ALSO REFERRING TO PROTOCOL, SOME COMMENTATORS CRITICIZED THE MANNER IN WHICH THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE MEETING HAD BEEN MADE. JACQUES AMALRIC IN LE MONDE COMMENTED THAT " IT DID NOT RESPECT PROTOCOL VERY MUCH" WHILE GAULLIST LA NATION SAID (IN TWO DIFFERENT ITEMS) THAT " THE ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE AMERICANS

HAVE CHOSEN TO MAKE" WAS MADE A " LITTLE PREMATURELY". COMMUNIST HUMANITE FOUND IT " UNUSUAL" THAT " MR. NIXON HAS GIVEN THIS INFORMATION ON HIS OWN AUTHORITY WITHOUT WARNING PARIS. THIS CAUSED A CERTAIN EMBARRASSMENT IN THE ELYSEE CORRIDORS." GOF RADIO STATION FRANCE- INTER EMPHASIZED IN ITS NEWS COVERAGE THAT POMPIDOU AND GOF WELCOMED MEETING AND WERE NOT SURPRISED BY

ANNOUNCEMENT.

8. FIGARO AND COMBAT BOTH REFER TO THE GOOD PRERSONAL
RELATIONS EXISTING BETWEEN THE TWO PRESIDENTS. FIGARO' S WASHINGTON
CORRESPONDENT JACQUET- FRANCILLON COMMENTS NIXON " IS DEADSET ON
MEETING WITH MR. POMPIDOU WHO, APPARENTLY, IS NO LESS EAGER, SINCE
HE INSISTED VERY MUCH ON THE IMPORTANCE HE ATTACHES TO ' PERSONAL
EXCHANGES OF VIEWS' ON THE OCCASION OF THE DELIVERY OF THE
CREDENTIALS OF THE NEW U. S. AMBASSADOR TO PARIS, MR. JOHN IRWIN,
LAST MONTH."
IRWIN

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973PARIS10689
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: n/a
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730445/aaaaiqnx.tel
Line Count: 184
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kellerpr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22-Aug-2001 by reddocgw>; APPROVED <10-Jan-2002 by kellerpr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 980122
Subject: FRENCH PRESS REACTIONS TO REPORTED NIXON-POMPIDOU MEETING
TAGS: PFOR, n/a
To: EUR
SECSTATE WASHDC
USIA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005